

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 GUATEM 04759 281828Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----119372 281851Z /47
O 281720Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6940

S E C R E T GUATEMALA 4759

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, GT, UK, BH
SUBJ: BRITISH-GUATEMALAN TALKS ON BELIZE

REF: GUATEMALA 4722

1. SUMMARY: JUDGING BY WHAT ROWLANDS TOLD ME LAST NIGHT ABOUT HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH PRESIDENT LAUGERUD AND FOREIGN MINISTER MOLINA, WHICH WAS CONSISTENT WITH WHAT PRESIDENT HAD ALREADY TOLD ME, HIS TALKS HERE HAVE SERVED THEIR PURPOSE OF FURTHER DEFUSING THE TENSION ON BELIZE; HAVE HELPED TO ESTABLISH A MORE PROMISING CLIMATE FOR FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS, THE DATE FOR WHICH HAS NOT BEEN FIXED; BUT HAVE NOT ADVANCED THE SUBSTANCE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. WHILE ROWLANDS FORESEES SOME WITHDRAWAL OF BRITISH REINFORCEMENTS FROM BELIZE IN DUE COURSE, THIS WILL NOT BE SEEN TO HAVE RESULTED FROM HIS CONVERSATIONS HERE AND ARE NOT A PRECONDITION FOR FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. INVITING ME TO BRITISH CONGEN'S RESIDENCE LAST NIGHT, BRITISH MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS ROWLANDS GAVE ME A REPORT ON HIS TALKS WITH GUATEMALAN LEADERS WHICH ESSENTIALLY CONFIRMED BUT SUPPLEMENTED WITH SOME IMPORTANT DETAILS THE REPORT THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD GIVEN ME THE DAY BEFORE. ROWLANDS SAID THEY HAD AGREED TO CONTINUE THE NEGOTIATIONS BUT HAD SET NO FIXED DATE FOR THEIR RESUMPTION; THESE TALKS WERE TO BE WITHOUT PRECONDI-

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 GUATEM 04759 281828Z

TION AND INDEED THE GOG HAD NOT PRESSED VERY HARD FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF BRITISH REINFORCEMENTS FROM BELIZE. ON THE KEY QUESTION OF TERRITORIAL CESSION, LAUGERUD AND MOLINA HAD NOT GIVEN THE SLIGHTEST GLIMMER OF MOVEMENT TOWARD ACCEPTANCE OF THE MOHO LINE. ROWLANDS SAID TO ME THAT HE WOULD NOT MOVE TO SELL THIS CESSION UNLESS HE HAD A FIRM ASSURANCE THAT IT WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO GUATEMALA, NOTING THAT WE SEEMED TO BE MORE OPTIMISTIC

ON THIS SCORE THAN THEY WERE. HE SAID THAT THERE HAD BEEN A BRIEF BUT INCONCLUSIVE DISCUSSION OF THE QUOTE U.S. IDEA UNQUOTE OF MEDIATION.

3. ROWLANDS SAID HE HAD BEEN GREATLY SURPRISED THAT THE GOG HAD NOT MADE A GREATER ISSUE OF BRITISH WITHDRAWAL OF ITS REINFORCEMENTS FROM BELIZE. HE HAD COME PRIMED TO DEFEND HIMSELF ON THIS POINT BUT PRESIDENT HAD BEEN PREOCCUPIED WITH OTHER ISSUES. GOG HAD TRIED TO INCLUDE THIS ISSUE IN ORIGINAL DRAFT OF COMMUNIQUE BUT HAD YIELDED FAIRLY READILY WHEN UK HAD ASKED FOR ITS DELETION. ROWLANDS TOLD ME THAT HE EXPECTED SOME WITHDRAWAL WOULD TAKE PLACE IN TWO MONTHS OR SO BUT IT WOULD NOT BE SEEN AS DIRECT CONSEQUENCE OF HIS TALKS HERE. HE SAID IN FACT THEY HAD ALREADY WITHDRAWN TWO OF THEIR THREE SHIPS.

4. HE SAID PRESIDENT HAD FOCUSED ON THE MISUNDERSTANDINGS THAT HAD LED TO RECENT CRISIS, AND WAYS TO REDUCE AND PREVENT TENSION. HE SAID IT WAS CLEAR THAT GOG IN LATE SPRING QUOTE HAD ADDED TWO AND TWO AND GOT FORTY-SIX UNQUOTE, CONVINCING THEMSELVES THAT UK WAS GETTING READY TO GRANT INDEPENDENCE. PRESIDENT HAD NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT HE HAD RESPONDED TO US ADVICE AND KEPT HIS TROOPS AWAY FROM THE BORDER. TO PREVENT SUCH MISUNDERSTANDINGS, PRESIDENT AND ROWLANDS HAD AGREED THAT IN THE FUTURE THEY WOULD DEAL MORE DIRECTLY WITH EACH OTHER.

5. PRESIDENT HAD ALSO SHOWED CONCERN ABOUT HEADING OFF UNFAVORABLE SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 GUATEM 04759 281828Z

ACTION IN UN. GOG WAS UNUSUALLY SENSITIVE ABOUT DISCUSSION OF BELIZE IN OTHER FORA -- AMONG COMMONWEALTH NATIONS, FOR EXAMPLE -- AND GOG EFFORTS TO GET THIS POINT REGISTERED IN COMMUNIQUE HAD PROVED ONE OF STICKEST POINTS. GOG WAS ESPECIALLY CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF NEW UN RESOLUTION WHICH MIGHT CALL FOR BELIZE'S INDEPENDENCE ON GROUND THAT NEGOTIATIONS WERE FAILURE, AND ROWLANDS HAD SAID HE WOULD TRY TO PREVENT THIS.

6. PRESIDENT HAD TOLD ROWLANDS THAT GOG WOULD NEED TO CONDUCT OVER NEXT THREE OR FOUR MONTHS A CAMPAIGN, USING PRESS, RADIO AND TV, TO EDUCATE GUATEMALAN PUBLIC ON MORE REALISTIC APPRECIATION OF BELIZE ISSUE. PRESIDENT HAD ALSO SPOKEN OF POSSIBILITY OF PRESENTING QUOTE OPTIONS UNQUOTE ON RESOLUTION OF BELIZE ISSUE TO GUATEMALAN PUBLIC BODIES, SUCH AS CONGRESS.

7. ROWLANDS SAID THEY HAD NOT FIXED A DATE FOR FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS BECAUSE NEITHER SIDE COULD REALISTICALLY CONTEMPLATE ANOTHER FULL-DRESS MEETING, WITH ALL THE EXPECTATIONS IT WOULD RAISE, TOO SOON. ALTHOUGH HE HAD NOT TOLD GUATEMALANS THIS, HE SAID HE KNEW HE COULD NOT GET PRICE TO AGREE TO MEET BEFORE SEPTEMBER. HE SAID THAT, ALTHOUGH IT WOULD NOT BE ANNOUNCED, HE AND MOLINA WOULD FIND AN OCCASION TO MEET IN U.S. ABOUT

SEPTEMBER 25 OR 26 AS MOLINA WOULD BE GOING TO UN ABOUT
SEPTEMBER 23 AND ROWLANDS HAD REASON TO VISIT CANADA ABOUT THAT
TIME. HE SAW THIS CONFIDENTIAL MEETING MOSTLY AS A HAND-
HOLDING SESSION WITH MOLINA ON UN ASPECT OF BELIZE.

8. NOTING THE FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE PREVAILING AT HIS TALKS,
ROWLANDS WAS HIGHLY COMPLIMENTARY ABOUT BOTH PRESIDENT AND MOLINA.
HE SAID HE HAD PROPOSED TO GOG THAT THEY SEND AN OFFICER TO
LONDON WHO WOULD BE COUNTERPART OF UK CONGEN MCQUILLAN HERE AND
REACTION HAD NOT BEEN UNFAVORABLE.

9. COMMENT: IT IS CLEAR FROM BOTH PRESIDENT'S AND ROWLANDS'
REACTIONS THAT THIS WEEK'S TALKS HAVE SUCCEEDED IN THEIR LIMITED
PURPOSE AND WE CAN EXPECT A FURTHER ABATEMENT OF TENSION OVER
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 GUATEM 04759 281828Z

BELIZE AT LEAST UNTIL THE ISSUE IS RAISED IN THE UN THIS FALL.
WHAT IS MISSING FROM THE PICTURE PRESENTED TO US THUS FAR, HOWEVER,
IS ANY CLEAR IDEA OF THE GOG'S PRIVATE THINKING ABOUT ITS
EVENTUAL RESPONSE TO THE BRITISH SUGGESTION OF A CESSION OF
TERRITORY BELOW THE MOHO. IT MAY BE THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO GET
A BETTER IDEA OF THIS IN THE DAYS AHEAD. IN THE MEANTIME, IT
SEEMS EVIDENT THAT THE GOG IS SATISFIED TO HAVE WON MORE TIME
ON BELIZE, WHICH IT WILL AT LEAST USE, IT SEEMS, TO BEGIN
CONDITIONING THE GUATEMALAN PEOPLE TO THE ACCEPTANCE OF LESS
IN A BELIZE SETTLEMENT THAN THEY HAD BEEN LED TO THINK
POSSIBLE IN THE PAST.

10. DEPARTMENT REPEAT AS DESIRED. ACCORDING TO ROWLANDS,
UK EMBASSY WILL BE BRIEFING DEPARTMENT ON BASIS OF A CABLE
HE IS REPEATING TO WASHINGTON.
BOSTER

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TROOP DEPLOYMENT, NEGOTIATIONS, TERRITORIAL CLAIMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 28-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977GUATEM04759
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770270-1206
Format: TEL
From: GUATEMALA
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770710/aaaaaiho.tel
Line Count: 152
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 66f38662-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 77 GUATEMALA 4722
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1721165
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BRITISH-GUATEMALAN TALKS ON BELIZE
TAGS: PBOR, PDEV, MOPS, GT, UK, BH
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/66f38662-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009